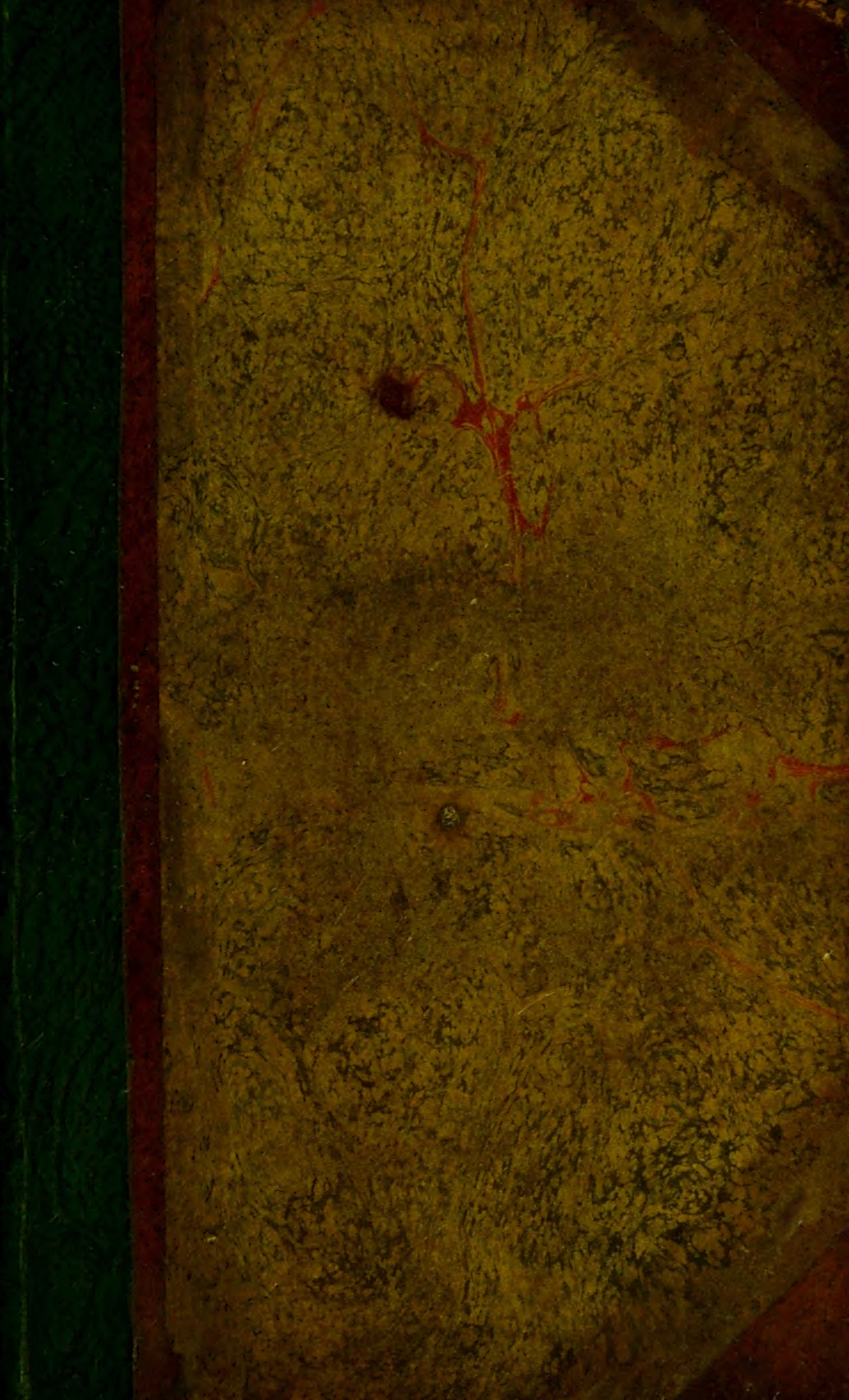


INCONNUE

(see p x)

LOUISA:

A

NARRATIVE OF FACTS,

SUPPOSED TO THROW LIGHT

ON THE MYSTERIOUS HISTORY

OF

"THE LADY OF THE HAY-STACK."

TRANSLATED FROM A FRENCH WORK, PUBLISHED IN THE IMPERIAL DOMINIONS, A. D. 1785.

BY THE REV. G. H. GLASSE, A. M.
RECTOR OF HANWELL, MIDDLESEX.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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W. COBBETT, R. FAULDER, J. HATCHARD,
F. AND C. RIVINGTON, AND F. WINGRAVE,
LONDON.

1801.

TO

MISS HANNAH MORE,

A LADY

MOST WORTHY OF ADMIRATION,

FOR

HER POETICAL ABILITIES,

HER ELEGANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS,

AND

HER GOODNESS OF HEART,

THIS ATTEMPT TO ELUCIDATE

THE MYSTERIOUS STORY

OF ONE OF THE OBJECTS

OF HER BENEFICENCE,

IS WITH ALL RESPECT INSCRIBED,

BY HER MOST FAITHFUL,

AND MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE TRANSLATOR.

JUNE 25, 1785.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

SIXTEEN years have elapſed ſince the little narrative was firſt publiſhed (without the Tranſlator's name) which will be found in the following pages. The unhappy Louiſa was at that time conſidered as an object of very general intereſt and curioſity, both here, and on the Continent of Europe. A more convincing proof of this fact cannot be adduced, than the pamphlet in queſtion; which, although from its tendency it was

circulated with extreme caution, found its way into every part of the extenſive Dominions of the houſe of Auſtria, and was conſidered of ſufficient importance by the then reigning Sovereign to be ſuppreſſed by his own immediate command and authority.

To thoſe perſons who are acquainted with the facts detailed in a late intereſting work, publiſhed by Nathaniel William Wraxall, Eſq. containing memoirs of the Court of Vienna in the years 1777, 1778, and 1779, the co-incidence between the ſtory of La Frëulen and that of Louiſa will appear to be more than poſſible. The licentious character of the Emperor Francis I. and the pious anxiety of his auguſt widow to draw a veil

over

over his irregularities, afford the moſt perfect ſolution to every circumſtance in the preſent narrative, which might otherwiſe be deemed obſcure and enigmatical.

Soon after the firſt edition of this work had made its appearance in an Engliſh dreſs, the poor Louiſa, from a ſtate of temporary and partial inſanity, fell into total idiocy, and deprivation of mental faculties. The names of every perſon mentioned in the French narrative were repeatedly and anxiouſly recited to her, under an idea of arreſting her attention, and, if poſſible, of eſtabliſhing the fact, on the ſuppoſition of which the work had been publiſhed. But the ſilence and reſerve, from which in her more

lucid intervals ſhe had never been induced to depart, was now changed into the apathy and torpor of morbid inſenſibility. The ſecret, whatever it was, is probably dead with her; for there is now very little proſpect of its being further elucidated.

The idea therefore held out in this narrative remains preciſely in its original ſtate, neither ſupported nor controverted by any evidence from abroad, ſubſequent to the firſt appearance of this work. At a moment when the death of the poor Louiſa has in ſome degree recalled the attention of the public to her myſterious ſtory, it has been judged proper to reprint the narrative, which on a former occaſion was ſo eagerly received,

ceived, and ſo rapidly and diffuſively circulated.

P. S. Some very curious and authentic documents, tranſmitted from Briſtol by Mrs. Hannah More, are now, by the obliging permiſſion of that excellent lady, ſuffered to be printed at the end of this little work, on a condition which the Tranſlator eagerly accepts; that of affixing his own name to the preſent edition. He cannot but avail himſelf with pleaſure of a privilege, which allows him to make himſelf known, as one of the moſt obliged and moſt grateful of her friends.

Hanwell Rectory,
February 27, 1801.

THE

TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

June 26, 1785.

THE following narrative was tranſmitted from the Continent, a few days ſince, to a lady of diſtinction, who had reſided for ſome years abroad. Under the ſanction of that lady's conſent, it is here offered to the public in an Engliſh dreſs.

The original tract makes its appearance without either name or place, or any other date than that of the preſent year*. It is entitled,

"L'INCONNUE,

* 1785.

"L'INCONNUE, HISTOIRE VE-"
"RITABLE," and originates moſt probably in ſome part of the Imperial dominions.

By way of introduction to the narrative, the author gives us the affecting recital of the ſufferings of a poor female ſtranger in the neighbourhood of Briſtol, tranſlated into French from the account then recently publiſhed in ſeveral Engliſh news-papers*. He leaves it to his readers to determine, whether the ſufferer in both inſtances is or is not one and the ſame perſon.

The Engliſh editor is equally deſirous to ſubmit this queſtion to the deciſion of the public; nor is it poſſible

* See the "TALE of REAL WOE," p. xvii.

ſible to attain to any thing beyond mere preſumptive evidence in this matter; the poor ſtranger's intellects being ſo deranged, as to preclude any further information from that quarter.

Whatever improbability or incoherence may by an attentive reader be diſcoverable in her ſtory, the *poſſibility* of its being true muſt certainly be admitted. And indeed it is on this ground that we preſent the following pages to the conſideration of our countrymen; to whom we ſhould pay but a very dubious compliment, were we to offer to their notice what appeared to ourſelves impoſſible or abſurd: ſuch a conduct would rather be an inſult offered to their underſtanding,

ſtanding, than a laudable deſire of contributing to their information or amuſement.

If any difficulty ſhould ariſe in the mind of the reader, on account of the poor wanderer's proficiency in the Engliſh language, this we think will in a great degree be ſolved, when it is remembered, that between the time of her diſmiſſion from Quiévraing, and her ſuppoſed appearance in the neighbourhood of Briſtol, ſeveral years had elapſed, of which no account whatever has been given: And there is no improbability in the idea, that this unfortunate ſtranger might during this period of her life, have been ſo ſituated, as to have acquired a

considerable knowlege of the English tongue.

To this, another circumstance may be added; viz. the facility with which our language is attained by those who have been accustomed to speak German. The similarity of idiom, and the connexion still subsisting between the two languages, may lead us readily to account for this fact. If we were called upon to illustrate our observation by an example, we have not far to go for a very striking one, in the first female personage in this kingdom; that illustrious personage, who has been pleased to extend her royal compassion to the helpless female, who sought so sad a refuge in the British dominions.

We

We are authorized to add, from the moſt recent accounts, that the poor unfortunate LOUISA (for that is the name by which ſhe is called at preſent) is ſtill in a ſtate of confinement, under the charitable patronage of a lady, whoſe character as a writer is ſo well eſtabliſhed, as not to ſtand in need of any eulogium from us; and whoſe character as a benevolent chriſtian, ſurpaſſes all that we are able to ſay of it. Humble merit in diſtreſs raiſes its head, ſupported by her generous exertions; and friendleſs, inoffenſive poverty is ſure of a refuge under her protection. The unhappy ſtranger's diſorder now approaches nearer to idiotiſm, than to lunacy—

her

her beauty is gone—her body is pale and emaciated—and ſhe is become a melancholy ſpectacle. She has once or twice been betrayed into an acknowlegement that ſhe underſtands the German language. She has been greatly affected by hearing it ſpoken; but has invariably maintained that artful reſerve, which leaves her origin and the place of her nativity, and, at any rate, the hiſtory of a great portion of her life, involved in uncertainty. This uncertainty we muſt not hope will be entirely done away, (though ſome light ſhould be thrown on her ſtory,) in thoſe pages, from which we do not wiſh any longer to detain our reader.

INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

A TALE of REAL WOE.*

THE following little narrative is ſo ſtrictly and literally true, that it does not require any ornament from fiction, or any embelliſhment from language. Thoſe, for whom truth has

*Firſt publiſhed in the St. James's Chronicle, about four years ſince. [1785.]

has any charms, will feel it, and to such only it is written. I shall relate it with the utmost simplicity, and the closest adherence to fact.

Near four years ago, a young woman stopped at a small village near Bristol, and begged the refreshment of a little milk.

There was something so attractive in her whole appearance as to engage the attention of all around her. She was extremely young, and strikingly beautiful: her manners graceful and elegant, and her countenance interesting to the last degree. She was alone—a stranger—and in extreme distress; yet she uttered no complaints, and used no arts to excite

compassion.

compaſſion. Her whole deportment and converſation bore viſible marks of ſuperior breeding, yet there was a wildneſs, an incoherence, and want of conſiſtency in all ſhe ſaid and did. All day ſhe wandered about in ſearch of a place to lay her wretched head, and at night ſhe actually took up her lodging under an old hay-ſtack.

The neighbouring ladies remonſtrated with her on the danger of ſo expoſed a ſituation, but in vain; their bounty ſupplied her with the neceſſaries of life, but neither prayers nor menaces could induce her to ſleep in a houſe. As ſhe ſometimes diſcovered evident marks of inſanity, ſhe was at length confined.

I paſs over this period of her hiſtory—it is too touching for my own feelings;—it would too tenderly affect the ſenſibility of the reader.

At length ſhe was releaſed; with all the ſpeed her ſmall remains of ſtrength allowed, ſhe flew to her beloved hay-ſtack, though it was ſix miles from the place of her confinement. Her rapture was inexpreſſible on finding herſelf at liberty, and once more ſafe beneath this miſerable ſhelter.

It is now near four years ſince this forlorn creature has devoted herſelf to this deſolate life, ſince ſhe has known the comfort of a bed, or the protection of a roof. Hardſhip, ſickneſs, intenſe

cold,

cold, and extreme mifery, have gradually injured her health, and impaired her beauty, but fhe is ftill a moft interefting figure; there is an uncommon fweetnefs and delicacy in her air and manner.

She is above all that vanity fo common to her fex, and fo natural to maniacs; for fhe will neither wear nor accept of any finery or ornaments, but hangs them on the bufhes as below her attention.

She refufes to give the leaft account of herfelf; her filence on this head is invincible; her recollection feems impaired, and her whole mind vifibly difturbed; yet her anfwers are per-

tinent enough, unleſs ſhe ſuſpects the queſtion is meant to enſnare her.

Her way of life is the moſt harmleſs and inoffenſive that can be imagined; every fine morning ſhe walks round the villages, converſes with the poor children, makes them little preſents of ſuch things as are given her, and receives others in return; ſhe will take nothing except milk, tea, and the moſt ſimple diet.

No means have been left unattempted by the neighbouring ladies (one in particular, who has been her conſtant and unwearied benefactreſs) to prevail on her to live in a houſe; but her conſtant reply is, "*that trouble* "*and miſery dwell in houſes, and that* "*there*

"*there is no happineſs but in liberty and*
"*freſh air.*"

[The French Author has here a note, part of which the Tranſlator has ventured to inſert into the text.

One in particular, &c. "This lady
"is named *Atking; ſhe reſides at
"Briſtol, and has benevolently un-
"dertaken the care of our fugitive.
"By the moſt conſtant aſſiduity, ſhe
"has perſuaded her to reſide at the
"houſe of a ſurgeon in that city,

 "where

* The word Atking we may ſuppoſe is here miſtaken for Aikin; the name of another female ornament of our country; which for obvious reaſons might eaſily be ſubſtituted for that of the poor Louiſa's real benefactreſs, to whom this tract is dedicated.

" where ſhe is ſtill living. He has
" contrived to gain her eſteem—but
" as ſoon as he would make any en-
" quiry as to her birth, ſhe lifts her
" finger to her lips.

" As her averſion to ſleeping in a
" bed ſubſiſts, a mattraſs is placed
" for her on the ground—and ſhe
" often amuſes herſelf with ſhaping
" the quilt into the imitation of a
" *royal robe.*

" One day a coach-and-four paſſed
" along the ſtreet: her attendants
" ran to the windows.—She enquired
" the cauſe; and then ſaid, ' *A won-*
" *derful ſight truly! my father's*
" *coach was always drawn by* EIGHT
" HORSES."]

From

From a certain peculiarity of expreſſion, with a ſlight foreign tincture in her pronunciation, and in the conſtruction of ſome ſentences, ſome have been led to conjecture *that ſhe is not of this country.* Various attempts have been made at different times to draw from this circumſtance ſome knowlege of her origin.

About a year ago a gentleman ſpoke to her in the languages of the Continent; ſhe appeared uneaſy, reſtleſs, and embarraſſed: but when he addreſſed her in GERMAN, her emotion was too great to be ſuppreſſed, ſhe turned from him, and burſt into tears.

This

This anecdote, which is told in the neighbourhood, was a few days ago related to two gentlemen, whom humanity led to viſit this forlorn creature.

One of them, who ſpoke German fluently, made the experiment; ſhe was evidently confuſed, bluſhed, and from accident, or a knowlege in the language, *anſwered ſome queſtions in Engliſh*; but, feeling as if ſhe had been hurried into an imprudence, ſhe artfully changed the ſubject, and denied having underſtood what had been ſaid to her.

This artleſs ſtory is written with no other view but the warm hope that it may catch the eye of ſome

one

one interefted in this tale of woe, and the ardent wifh of reftoring an amiable and wretched young creature to the arms of (perhaps) a broken-hearted parent.

The writer heartily wifhes the whole had been a fiction, and that he had not been himfelf an eye-witnefs to the diftrefs he relates—it would have fpared him many a pang of unavailing forrow, and (although a man) fome tears of ufelefs compaffion.

PHILALETHES.

*** *The*

*** *THE following lines (written under the idea that the Bristol-stranger was a fugitive from a Convent) will, perhaps, not be unacceptable to the public. They are extracted from a poem entitled* "Clifton Hill."

Beneath this ſtack Louiſa's dwelling roſe,
Here the fair Maniac bore three winter's ſnows,
Here long ſhe ſhiver'd, ſtiffening in the blaſt;
The light'nings round their livid horrors caſt.—

* * * * * *

She ſtarts — then ſeiz'd the moment of her
fate,
Quits the lone cloiſter, and the horrid grate,
Whilſt wilder horrors to receive her wait:
Muffled, on freedom's happy plains they ſtand,
And eager ſeize her not-reluctant hand.
Too late to theſe mild ſhores the mourner came,
For now the guilt of flight overwhelms her
frame.

* * * * * *

Diſhevelled, lo! her beauteous treſſes fly,
And the wild glance now fills the ſtaring eye:

The

'The balls fierce glaring in their orbits move;
Bright ſpheres, (where beam'd the ſparkling fires of love)
Now roam for objects which once fill'd her mind,
Ah! long loſt objects they muſt never find.
Ill-ſtarr'd Louisa! ——

These

(COPY.)

Guy's Hoſpital,
February 18, 1801.

Theſe are to Certify,

THAT LOUISA, a *Lunatic*, died in Guy's Hoſpital Lunatic-Houſe on the 19th of December, 1800; and was buried in the Ground belonging to the ſaid Hoſpital, in the cuſtomary manner in which the Patients are buried.

Witneſs my Hand, this 18th of February, 1801.

THOMAS CALLAWAY,
STEWARD of the ſaid Hoſpital.

ALFRED W^M. ROBERTS,
CHAPLAIN.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

LOUISA.

LOUISA.

IN the ſummer of the year 1768, the Count de Cobenzel, Imperial Miniſter at Bruſſels, received a letter from a lady at Bourdeaux; the writer requeſted him "not to think it ſtrange, "if his advice and friendſhip were "eagerly ſought after;" — adding, "that the univerſal reſpect which his "talents and his intereſt at Court had "acquired, engaged her to addreſs "herſelf to him — that in a little "time he ſhould know who the per-"ſon was, that had preſumed to ſo-

"licit his good offices, and that per-
"haps he would not repent of having
"attended to her." This letter, which was written in very indifferent French, was figned *La Frëulen.* The Count was defired to return an anfwer to Mademoifelle La Frëulen, at Bourdeaux.

A fhort time after this, the Count received a letter from Prague, figned "Le Comte J. de Weiffendorff," in which he was entreated to give the beft advice in his power to Mademoifelle La Frëulen — to intereft himfelf warmly in her behalf—to write to Bourdeaux in her favour—and even to advance her money, to the amount of a thoufand ducats, if fhe ftood in need of it. The letter was concluded in

thefe words: *When you ſhall know, Sir,* WHO *this ſtranger is, you will be delighted to think that you have ſerved her, and grateful to thoſe who have given you the opportunity of doing it.*

M. de Cobenzel replied to the Lady, that he was highly ſenſible of the honour of her good opinion—that he ſhould be proud of aſſiſting her with his advice, and of ſerving her to the utmoſt of his power: but that it was abſolutely neceſſary he ſhould in the firſt inſtance be informed of her real name.

After this the Count received a letter from Vienna, ſigned "Le Comte de Dietrichſtein." In this he was again requeſted to pay every poſſible attention to Mademoiſelle La Frëulen,

and in particular to entreat her to be ſrugal. He anſwered this, as well as the former letter from Prague—but no notice was taken of his reply to either.

Meanwhile his epiſtolary intercourſe with the young lady at Bourdeaux continued. Towards the end of the ſame year, the wife of a tradeſman of that city, named Madame L'Englumée, came to Bruſſels upon buſineſs—that buſineſs having introduced her to the Count de Cobenzel, ſhe ſpoke to him of Mademoiſelle La Frëulen in terms of the higheſt praiſe. She extolled her beauty, her elegance, and above all, that prudence and propriety of conduct, which did ſo much honour to a perſon, left at that tender age to her own diſpoſal. She added,

that

that the young lady had a houſe of her own, that ſhe was generous, expenſive, and even magnificent—that ſhe had been three years at Bourdeaux — that the diſtinguiſhed attention with which the Maréchal de Richeſieu treated her, the extreme reſemblance of her features to thoſe of the late Emperor, Francis the Firſt, and the entire ignorance of all the world, as to her birth, gave riſe to ſtrange conjectures—that the young lady had often been queſtioned on the ſubject, *but that ſhe always took care to obſerve the moſt ſcrupulous ſilence as to her family.* . . . .

The Count was afterwards deſired by Mademoiſelle La Frëulen to ſend her an head-dreſs of Bruſſels lace, va-

lued at fifty louis-d'ors. This commiſſion he executed; but ſome time afterwards ſhe ſent him word that ſhe ſhould rèturn this head-dreſs, (which ſhe had only once worn) becauſe ſhe was unable to pay for it. The Count requeſted her not to give herſelf that trouble.

She likewiſe informed him, that ſhe was highly diſpleaſed with the Count de Mercy-Argenteau, the Imperial Ambaſſador at Paris, on account of that extreme curioſity which he thought proper to expreſs reſpecting her ſtory.—She added, that all his perſecution would be fruitleſs, becauſe ſhe was determined not to admit him to her confidence. She ſaid, however, that ſhe was ready to inform M. de

Cobenzel

Cobenzel of every particular — but that the ſecret was too important to be truſted to chance; and therefore ſhe propoſed to viſit the Auſtrian Netherlands, and to acquaint him with all her hiſtory.—In the mean time ſhe ſent him her picture, which ſhe deſired him to examine with attention, and which ſhe imagined likely to lead him to ſome conjectures as to what ſhe had to relate. Accordingly ſhe ſent the miniature.—The Count ſaw in it nothing more than the features of a very lovely woman—but Prince Charles de Lorraine thought the portrait bore a ſtrong reſemblance to the late Emperor, his brother.

The correſpondence ſtill continued. M. de Cobenzel anſwered all the letters in a polite, and even an affec-

tionate manner; but was particularly guarded in his expreſſions. One day ſhe acquainted him that ſhe would ſend him two more pictures, with one of which ſhe begged him to compare her own. The Count, not receiving them, preſſed her to fulfil her promiſe—ſhe replied, that ſhe had ſent them to a jeweller, to take them out of a caſket in which they were ſet with diamonds, and that as ſoon as the jeweller returned them, ſhe would diſpatch them to Bruſſels. In fact, about a fortnight afterwards, ſhe ſent him the portraits of the Emperor and Empreſs.—The former was known by Prince Charles to have been painted by Liotard.

In

In December 1768, M. de Có-benzel received a very ſingular letter, dated, " VIENNA. *From my bed,— two in the morning.*" In this the Count was highly commended for the good advice he had given the young ſtranger, and requeſted to continue his attentions. He was told that M. de Mercy had behaved in a very different manner towards her, and that he might one day feel the conſequences. — The writer added, that the poor girl had ſuffered greatly; but that it was deſigned to put her in ſuch a ſituation as would make her ample amends; — " *ſhe was ſo tenderly recommended to " me by that perſon who was deareſt " to me in the world!*" The Count

was

was charged to inculcate economy, and particularly admoniſhed of the importance of the ſecret. This letter had no ſignature.

Some time afterwards, the young lady ſent to M. de Cobenzel, enquiring, whether he had not received a letter concerning her? He anſwered in the affirmative; and ſaid that ſhe had been recommended to his care in the ſtrongeſt terms. She replied, "I am "much obliged to you for your good-"neſs; but I will tell you honeſtly, "that if I wanted any particular fa-"vour, I would rather addreſs myſelf "to God than to the Saints!"

In the beginning of the year 1769, the Count received ſome diſpatches from Vienna, which contained ſeveral very

very extraordinary circumſtances reſpecting the ſtranger. The Court of Vienna had ſent a requiſition to that of Verſailles, to arreſt Mademoiſelle La Frëulen, and to ſend her under a ſtrong guard to Bruſſels, where ſhe was to be examined by M. de Cobenzel, and the firſt Preſident, M. de Neny. Prince Charles, about the ſame time, received a letter from the Empreſs, enjoining him to be very careful that the priſoner ſhould not eſcape—and bidding him ſpare neither pains nor expence in detaining her. Her Majeſty's letter was concluded as follows—"*This wretch wiſhes to paſs for the* "*daughter of our late royal maſter*— "*if there was the leaſt probability in* "*the ſtory, I would love her, and* "*treat*

"*treat her like one of my own children;*
"*but I know it is an impoſture:*
"*and I wiſh every poſſible effort to be*
"*made, that this unhappy creature*
"*may no longer profane the dear and*
"*venerable name of our departed*
"*Lord.*" Her Majeſty recommended the ſtricteſt ſecrecy in carrying on the buſineſs—and added, that this adventure had already made too much noiſe, and that all Europe would ſoon ring of it.

It ſeems the Court of Vienna was informed of the affair in the following manner. While JOSEPH II. was on his travels in Italy, the King of Spain received a letter, apparently written by his Imperial Majeſty, informing him in confidence, that

his

his father, the late Emperor, had left a natural daughter, whose story was only known to his sister the Archdutchess Marianne, himself, and a few faithful and confidential friends—that the young lady had been most earnestly recommended to his care by his father—and that she was resident at Bourdeaux. He intreated the King of Spain to send for her, and give her an establishment at Madrid with some lady of rank, or in a convent, where she might be treated with the care and respect due to her birth, till some plan should be fixed on for the future happiness of her life. He added, that he requested this mark of friendship of His Catholic Majesty, because he

himself

himſelf did not dare to undertake theſe kind offices for the perſon in queſtion, leſt the Empreſs ſhould by ſome means or other hear of it, whom he wiſhed to remain in perpetual ignorance of the ſtory.

The King of Spain, thinking this letter very extraordinary, tranſmitted it to the Emperor himſelf, who was then at Milan, demanding ſome explanation of the matter. The Emperor, who had not written the letter, nor had ever heard a ſyllable of the adventure, ſent the pacquet to the Empreſs; who made immediate enquiries about the ſtranger, and diſpatched a meſſenger to Bourdeaux to ſeize her. She was arreſted in her own houſe, in Auguſt 1769, by

M.

M. Carel de Ferrand, Lieutenant of the Marechaufée of the Province of Guienne, who was her intimate friend, and whofe nephew had folicited her hand; but this, for reafons that will afterwards appear, fhe had peremptorily refufed. As foon as the rumour of her arreft was fpread about the city, her creditors took the alarm; and Madame L'Englumée, the very perfon who had given fuch an advantageous character of her to M. de Cobenzel, came to infult her in fo brutal a manner, that M. de Ferrand ordered her to be turned out of the apartment.

Fear and diftrefs took off much of La Frëulen's beauty—fhe had continual fpafms in her ftomach, attended with

with ſpitting of blood, which obliged her to travel very ſlowly. At length ſhe arrived at Bruſſels, attended by M. de Poyot, an officer under M. de Ferrand. While ſhe was on her journey, and almoſt immediately before ſhe quitted the French dominions, a perſon unknown, dreſſed like a courier, put a billet into her hands at the coach-window, and then fled with the utmoſt precipitation. She begged her guide to read the billet, which only contained theſe words— "My dear girl, every thing has been "attempted to ſave you: keep up "your ſpirits, and do not deſpair." She proteſted, that ſhe neither knew the courier, nor the hand writing.

On

On her arrival at Bruſſels, ſhe was immediately taken to the hôtel of the Count de Cobenzel. She was dreſſed in a gown of grey taffeta, a black cloak, and a veil of white gauze, which covered her face, and which ſhe took off when ſhe entered the miniſter's apartment. Her figure would have intereſted the moſt inſenſible heart in her favour. She was tall and elegantly formed—her air was at once ſimple and majeſtic—her complexion was fair—her arms were delicately turned—her hair was brown, and calculated to receive the embelliſhments of art to the greateſt advantage. She had that freſhneſs of colour which no borrowed tints can imitate; fine dark eyes, and a look, which

expreſſed every emotion of her ſoul. She ſpoke French with a German accent, and appeared much confuſed, but without any particular ſymptom of female weakneſs.

Her alarm was ſoon diſſipated by that confidence which M. de Cobenzel ſo well knew how to inſpire—in her letters ſhe had always called him her Father — when in his preſence ſhe addreſſed him by the ſame endearing name — ſhe would have kiſſed his hand, but he prevented her, by catching her in his arms. He ſat down near her—talked to her on the ſubject of her health—deſired her to make herſelf perfectly eaſy—and told her ſhe ſhould have the utmoſt attention and the kindeſt treatment, if ſhe

would

would ſtrictly adhere to truth.—She repeated ſeveral times,—"Yes, my "dear father, I will inform you of "every thing—I am a good girl, and "never injured any human creature. "It is true I have contracted ſome "debts—but was that a crime? I had "been plentifully ſupplied with mo-"ney, and I expected a continuation "of my allowance." All her diſtreſs appeared to ariſe from the circumſtance of her debts—thoſe ſhe conſidered as her only faults, and as the ſole cauſe of her having been apprehended.—She inveighed againſt the cruelty of Madame L'Englumée—ſhe ſaid, that M. de Ferrand had aſſured her, the ſum due to that woman ſhould only be paid in part, as ſhe had groſſly

deceived her in the price of every article that ſhe had ſold her. She expreſſed no concern whatever at her being a priſoner, and only aſked M. de Cobenzel if ſhe might not remain at his houſe. The Count frankly told her that this was impoſſible; aſſuring her at the ſame time, that ſhe ſhould be treated with all imaginable reſpect, in an apartment which he had prepared for her in the fortreſs of Monterel, at a very little diſtance from Bruſſels; and that if ſhe wanted any thing, ſhe had but to expreſs her wiſh, and her commands ſhould immediately be obeyed. He promiſed to wait on her there the next day; and ſhe took her leave of him, to all appearance in a ſtate of perfect tranquillity.

quillity. She was conducted to Fort Monterel, under the guard of Major de Camerlang, a man of ſenſe and good nature; and M. de Neny had taken care to provide a female attendant for her. The next day the Count went to ſee her—he found her in very good ſpirits; ſhe ſeemed delighted with her apartment, and pleaſed with the conduct of thoſe about her. The Count offered her the uſe of any books from his library. She thanked him; but ſaid ſhe never had a moment which hung heavy on her hands, ſo much was her mind taken up with viſionary projects for her future life—the truth was, ſhe could neither read nor write. M. de Camerlang taught her to ſign her name, while ſhe was in

confinement. The cause of this ignorance will presently be explained.

The next day her examination began. M. de Cobenzel and the President went to Fort Monterel, at ten in the morning. The Count de Neny, who had not as yet seen the prisoner, was extremely surprised at her striking resemblance to the late Emperor. They asked her, where she was born? she said she knew not, but that she had been told the place where she was educated, was called Bohemia. She was asked, if that place was a town? and what was the earliest incident in the course of her life that she could remember? she said, that the place where she was brought up, was a little sequestered house in the country; that

that there was neither town nor village near it—and that before her inhabiting this houſe, ſhe had not the leaſt recollection of any thing which had happened to her. That in her infancy ſhe had been under the care of two women, one about fifty years old, the other about thirty. That ſhe called the firſt *Mama*, the ſecond Catherine — that ſhe ſlept in the apartment of the firſt-named woman, and that both of them treated her with much kindneſs and affection— that from time to time, an Eccleſiaſtic (as ſhe has ſince ſuſpected, a Jeſuit) came to ſay maſs in an apartment in the houſe, and to teach her the catechiſm — that the woman ſhe named "mama," had begun to inſtruct her

in reading and writing, but that the prieſt oppoſed it, from the moment it came to his knowlege; and from that time ſhe was taught no more. However, ſhe added, that he always treated her with infinite reſpect.

She ſaid, that about a year after this, a handſome man, in a hunting ſuit, accompanied by another gentleman, dreſt in the ſame manner, came to the houſe where ſhe reſided. That ſhe was immediately ſent for; when the ſtranger embraced her, placed her on his knees, careſſed her much, and recommended it to her to be good and ſubmiſſive. She doubts not that this perſon had ſeen her before, becauſe ſhe recollects that he thought her grown taller, and altered;

but ſhe never remembers having ſeen him at any former time.

About eighteen months afterwards, he returned, accompanied by the ſame attendant as before, and wearing the very ſame dreſs. She ſaid, that, at this ſecond interview, the features of her unknown viſitor made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion on her mind, that had ſhe never ſeen him more, ſhe ſhould not have forgotten them. She ſays, that he was of a middling ſize, and rather corpulent, that he had an open countenance, a ruddy complexion, a dark beard, and a little white ſpot upon one of his temples. She obſerved, that M. de Neny bore ſome diſtant reſemblance to the perſon ſhe ſpoke of, particularly in the lower

part

part of his face—she said further, that at this second interview, remarking somewhat red that appeared about the stranger's neck under his riding-coat, she asked him what it was? he replied, it was a mark of distinction worn by officers — she, ignorant in every particular, enquired what he meant by an *officer?* "They "are," said he, "Men of Honour, "Gallantry, and Spirit, whom you "must love, because you are the "daughter of an officer yourself." She added, that at this second visit she found herself extremely attached to the stranger—and that when he took his leave, she shed a flood of tears; at which he appeared much

affected,

affected, and promifed her foon to return.

He did not keep his word—for he returned not till two years after; and when fhe reproached him with abfenting himfelf fo long, he told her, that at the time he had fixed for coming to her, he had been violently ill, in confequence of over-heating himfelf in the chace.

[N. B. Prince Charles recollected, that at a time correfponding with that above-mentioned, the Emperor was in fact taken ill on his return from hunting.]

This third interview, which was the laft, furnifhes the moft interefting anecdotes. The ftranger defired to be left alone with her. When he told

told her of his illneſs ſhe ſhed tears—he was himſelf melted, and aſked her why ſhe wept? "Becauſe "I love you." He aſſured her that he felt equal love for her—that he would take care of her—would make her rich and happy—would give her a palace, money, and attendants; and that her domeſtics ſhould wear yellow and blue liveries. He aſked her, afterwards, if ſhe did not wiſh to ſee the queen? ſhe replied, ſhe did not know what a queen meant. "A queen is the firſt lady in the "kingdom, and highly to be re-"ſpected as ſuch; you would love her "much if you knew her—but that, "for the ſake of her peace of mind, "you muſt never do."——He

then

then preſented her with the two pictures, which ſhe had ſent from Bourdeaux to M. de Cobenzel. She ſaid, ſhe told the ſtranger, that one was his own picture—he allowed it; and bade her keep it as long as ſhe lived, as well as that of the Empreſs: and a third picture, which he afterwards gave her, of a female, whoſe features were half concealed by a veil. This, he told her, was her own mother. The pictures were in a blue ſilk purſe which contained a great quantity of ducats. The ſtranger, when he quitted the young lady, aſſured her ſhe ſhould ſoon be happy, and not have a wiſh ungratified; but that ſhe muſt promiſe him *never to marry*, and to keep that vow always

in

in her remembrance. After this he took leave of her with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and ſhe was herſelf extremely affected.

She related, that in the interval between the ſtranger's firſt and ſecond viſit, there came one day, accompanied by two men, a lady, who aſked to ſee her. The lady was dreſſed in a ſtyle of great ſimplicity: ſhe was of moderate ſtature, fair, of a pleaſing aſpect, and rather inclining to corpulence. This lady looked at her with great earneſtneſs, and began to weep—ſhe aſked her ſeveral indifferent queſtions, and then embracing her two or three times, ſaid, "My "child, you are indeed unhappy!"—Her emotion was ſo great, that ſhe called

called for a glaſs of water to keep her from fainting—ſhe drank it, and departed immediately. Mademoiſelle la Frëulen ſaid, that ſhe could not be poſitive, whether the picture which the ſtranger gave her at his laſt viſit, bore any reſemblance to this lady or not.

When the examination had proceeded thus far, it was obſerved that the young priſoner began to prevaricate about the circumſtances of her ſtory. Yet even after this was diſcovered, ſhe perſiſted in moſt ſolemnly declaring, that till now, and indeed till her quitting the houſe where ſhe was educated, her narrative had been faithful in all its particulars. Every incident was thoroughly examined—

amined—the queſtions were put to her in every poſſible form, to obſerve if ſhe did not vary in her replies; but ſhe always repeated the above facts with the ſame circumſtances, and the ſame ſimplicity.

She then told the ſtory of her departure from the place of her education, in words to the following purport.

That a little time after the ſtranger's laſt viſit, the Eccleſiaſtic who had taken care of her from her infancy, came to inform her, that her Protector was no more; and that before he expired, he had ordered her to be conducted to ſome convent in France —the prieſt ſaid, "that ſhe muſt "ſet forward on her journey in a "few days, and that he came to "meaſure

"measure her for some apparel;" which he afterwards did, with a ribbon he had brought with him for that purpose. A week after this he arrived in a post-chaise, bringing with him four complete dresses, viz. two pelisses, a black gown, and a red one; till now she had only worn a dimity undress. The priest immediately made a parcel of all the young lady's little property.—She put on a blue pelisse—he handed her and her attendant Catharine into the carriage and then got into it himself.

She wept grievously at parting with the woman she had called "mama;" but besides what she felt on account of the separation, she was terribly afraid of the convent. The enquiries she had

made of Catharine and her mama (in the week preceding her departure) had given her moſt frightful ideas of the life to which ſhe thought herſelf condemned for the remainder of her days. She could not tell what towns ſhe paſſed through; but ſhe ſaid, that on her arrival at Hamburgh, the prieſt, after diſmiſſing her attendant, made her embark on board a veſſel freighted for Bourdeaux. The moment ſhe took ſhip, a man, to all appearance about fifty years old, came to offer her his ſervices, ſaying, that he would take care of her during her voyage. On their arrival at Bourdeaux, this man, who had acquired great influence over her, took her to the houſe of a German merchant, who was ſettled in

that

that city; and the wife of this merchant placed her with Madame Guillaumot, with whom ſhe remained, during the whole time of her ſtay in Bourdeaux. A fortnight after her arrival at this lady's houſe, a letter was brought to her, addreſſed "to Mademoiſelle Felicia Juliana de Schonau," a name which, at her leaving Bohemia, the prieſt told her ſhe was in future to conſider as her own. Madame Guillaumot, by her deſire, read this letter to her.—It contained rules for her future conduct, and aſſurances, that ſhe ſhould be amply ſupplied with money—ſhe was directed by the writer to remain with Madame Guillaumot; but ſhe was adviſed to perſuade that lady to diſmiſs all her other

boarders, and to devote her attention to her alone. This letter was concluded without either ſignature or date, and it enjoined her to be diſcreet, and to forbear making too curious enquiries.—Some days after this, a gentleman came to her houſe, and, without any preface, put a purſe of a thouſand louis-d'-ors into her hands; only adding, that he was commanded to advance her that ſum for the purchaſe of furniture. She aſked him, from whence the money came? he begged her to make herſelf eaſy, and not to be curious.—She ſays ſhe has reaſon to think this man was an Eccleſiaſtic. She then took a houſe and furniſhed it. Madame Guillaumot went thither as her companion—and ſhe lived at

Bourdeaux

Bourdeaux amongſt perſons of the firſt conſequence, till the day of her confinement.

The manner in which the ſtranger told the tale of her embarking at Hamburgh and her arrival at Bourdeaux appearing highly improbable, M. de Cobenzel told her, it was evident that her ſtory was untrue.—He bade her remember what he had ſaid to her on the day of her arrival at Bruſſels; "that the only way to obtain the favour and protection of the Empreſs, "was to be ingenuous and ſincere"—that it was on this condition alone he had offered her his beſt ſervices; but that, as he found ſhe had deceived him, he ſhould now abandon her to all the conſequences of her impoſture.

 As

As the Count ſaid this, he looked at her with a fixed and ſevere countenance, which diſconcerted her the more, as till now ſhe had only ſeen that air of tenderneſs and politeneſs, which marked his general character. She was all confuſion; and M. de Cobenzel having riſen from his ſeat, as if about to depart, ſhe held him by his cloaths, and throwing herſelf at his feet, ſaid, with many tears, that it was true ſhe had much to relate to him, but ſhe could ſay no more in the preſence of Monſieur de Neny's ſecretary. As ſoon as that gentleman had left the room, ſhe fell down again on her knees, and, with renewed expreſſions of grief, entreated M. de Cobenzel to take pity upon her; confeſſed

feffed that fhe had deceived him in the account of her embarkation at Hamburgh; but called Heaven to witnefs, that all which fhe had faid of her education in Bohemia was true to the moft minute circumftance. She afterwards always perfifted in this affertion, nor ever varied in the fmalleft particular, when crofs-examined at different times as to the former part of her life.—And thus fhe told anew the ftory of her departure.

When the prieft came to take her from her houfe in Bohemia, he told her, that he was going to conduct her to a convent in France. Ignorant as fhe was, the little which Catharine and her mama had told her of a religious life, taught her to confider

a convent as an horrible priſon, from which there was no eſcape: and this idea had ſo diſturbed her mind, that from the moment of her quitting her habitation in Bohemia, ſhe had formed the project of flying, as ſoon as poſſible, from ſuch captivity.—During her journey to Hamburgh, ſhe found no opportunity of executing her deſign—but her alarm was ſo much increaſed, when on her arrival in that city, ſhe ſaw the ſea, and the ſhips, that on the eve of the day fixed for her departure, ſhe roſe from Catharine's ſide as ſhe ſlept, made a little parcel of one gown and ſome linen, took the blue purſe with the three pictures, and the hundred ducats which the ſtranger had given her, and

at

at break of day left the city. She walked a long time; till ſpent with fatigue and terror, *ſhe took refuge in the barn of a farmer, and there fell aſleep.* The owner of the premiſes found her, and, ſtruck with her youth and beauty, civilly offered her a little room, and the beſt bed in his houſe, which ſhe accepted.

Her fears not ſuffering her to continue ſo near to Hamburgh, ſhe ſoon quitted this retreat. She wiſhed to give ſome proof of her gratitude to the honeſt people who had afforded her protection; but they would accept of nothing. From hence, mounted on a wretched carriage, ſhe took the road towards Sweden. — The third day of her journey, ſhe fell from the vehicle,

vehicle, and received ſo dangerous a wound in her head, that it was neceſſary to take her to a neighbouring inn, and call in the aſſiſtance of a ſurgeon.

It happened, that a Dutch family called at this inn in their way to Pomerania and Sweden—theſe people defrayed the expences of her ſickneſs, and, out of compaſſion, ſuffered her to join their travelling party. (At her examination, ſhe told the names of theſe Hollanders, as well as that of a Lutheran prieſt who was with them, and who, at this preſent time, is private tutor to a merchant's children in Hamburgh.) When ſhe arrived at Stockholm, ſhe quitted her fellow travellers, and went to lodge at the houſe of a German woman, whoſe

huſband

husband had a ſmall poſt under Government. This woman, happily for Mademoiſelle La Frëulen was a perſon of great integrity, and conceived the tendereſt friendſhip for her. While ſhe reſided here, her hair-dreſſer told her one day, that the Count de Belgioioſo, Imperial Miniſter at Stockholm, was making ſtrict enquiries after a young lady that had eloped from Hamburgh. La Frëulen, who began to form an idea of the conſequences of her flight, and whom the apprehenſions of poverty terrified ſtill more than the thoughts of a convent, told her informer, that ſhe was the perſon ſought after, and permitted him to make this diſcovery to the Ambaſſador. The next day ſhe received

received a billet from that Miniſter, inviting her to his houſe. The billet was read to her by a girl that waited upon her, named Sophia—ſhe did not heſitate a moment, but repaired that day to the Count de Belgioioſo. He received her with great reſpect; aſked her the circumſtances of her departure from Hamburgh—and it being (as he thought by her replies), evident that ſhe was the perſon whom he ſought, he told her, that he was inſtructed to take the greateſt care of her, and that he would go to ſee whether ſhe was in convenient lodgings. He offered her money, which ſhe accepted, for the blue purſe was entirely empty. M. de Belgioioſo went to viſit her the next day—he told her

ſhe

ſhe muſt ſtay no longer in ſuch a place, and that he would procure her a more commodious apartment near his own houſe. In two days ſhe went to this apartment — it was at the houſe of a tradeſman: and Sophia continued about her perſon.—M. de Belgioioſo ſent her a lacquey, and furniſhed her with proviſions from his own table. Not long afterwards, he told her that ſhe had been ſtill more ſtrongly recommended to his protection, and that ſhe muſt take up her abode at his houſe; and accordingly ſhe went thither the ſame afternoon.

She ſays, that while ſhe was at the houſe of M. de Belgioioſo, ſhe was ſo affected by the ſight of a picture, perfectly reſembling the ſtranger who

came

came three times to fee her at her dwelling in Bohemia, that fhe fwooned away upon the fpot. (The Count de Belgioiofo has by letter confirmed this affertion; and it feems the picture was that of the Emperor Francis.) It was with the greateft difficulty that they recovered her from her fainting-fit; and a violent fever was the confequence, which very nearly proved fatal to her. She fays fhe grew taller during this illnefs, which lafted fix weeks, and was fo much altered, that fhe appeared to be thirty years old, though fhe could not at this time have been above fixteen.

When fhe was perfectly recovered, the Ambaffador told her, he had received advice from Hamburgh, that fhe

ſhe had quitted that city in company with a young Engliſhman. She denied it in the moſt ſolemn manner, becauſe ſhe had no Engliſh acquaintance whatever: but M. de Belgioioſo perſiſted in his accuſation ſo long, that, wearied out with conſtant perſecution on the ſubject, ſhe confeſſed herſelf guilty of a crime which ſhe knew was falſely laid to her charge.

This raſh confeſſion, as well as many other inſtances of imprudence in her conduct, ſhe attempted to palliate, in a manner that very ſtrongly proved her ſimplicity and ignorance of the world. Her ignorance indeed extended to ſuch a degree, that M. St. Gere, Aſſiſtant to the Imperial Conſul at Bourdeaux, who

was

was ſent for to Bruſſels during the priſoner's examination, depoſed, that while he was her ſecretary at Bourdeaux, ſhe wiſhed him to ſign a feigned name to a letter—and when he remonſtrated, that ſhe could not make uſe of a name that was not her own, ſhe replied, "Who can forbid "my doing any thing that I wiſh? "May I not aſſume any name, any "ſignature, at my pleaſure?"

It muſt be obſerved, that about the time of her elopement from Hamburgh, the daughter of a merchant in that city had been carried off by a young Engliſhman; and this adventure, being confounded with that of our heroine, gave the Ambaſſador thoſe ſuſpicions which ſhe had the folly

folly to confirm. It is evident that after this confeſſion, M. de Belgioioſo believed her to be the merchant's daughter, and not the young lady who had been recommended to his care: becauſe a little time after this, he told her, he was miſtaken as to her perſon, and adviſed her to return to Hamburgh. He gave her twenty-five louis-d'-ors for her travelling expences, and entruſted her to the care of a merchant who was then on his return to that city. On her arrival at Hamburgh, ſhe anxiouſly ſought after thoſe perſons, whom ſhe had quitted with ſo much precipitation—ſhe walked every day on the quay, and in the moſt frequented parts of the town.

At this time, a man, in appearance about fifty years old, and plainly dreſſed, who had followed her at a diſtance for ſeveral days, at laſt accoſted her, and propoſed to her to go to Bourdeaux. She conſented to it the more readily, becauſe ſhe recollected that the prieſt had wiſhed her to embark for that place—and ſhe ſuppoſed, that by following the plan at firſt marked out for her, ſhe ſhould the more eaſily meet with thoſe who intereſted themſelves about her fate. The man whom ſhe met on the quay embarked with her—her voyage was proſperous in every particular, and he attended her during the courſe of it in the manner ſhe had at firſt related. The priſoner

always

always perſiſted in ſaying that every circumſtance ſhe had mentioned, of her arrival at Bourdeaux, and her adventures in that city, was moſt ſcrupulouſly true.

Soon after ſhe had taken a houſe of her own, to which Madame Guillaumot accompanied her, ſhe received an anonymous letter, in which ſhe was commanded to go to the Duke de Richelieu, and aſk that protection, of which ſhe ſtood ſo much in need. The writer preſſed her the more earneſtly to do this, becauſe the Duke was already acquainted with the particulars of her ſtory. Accordingly ſhe went to the Duke's palace. He informed her that he had received a letter from the Princeſs d'Averſberg, re-

commending Mademoiſelle de Schonau in the ſtrongeſt terms to his care. He made her a thouſand offers of ſervice, and according to his cuſtom, ſaid more than a woman of honour ought to hear. She burſt into tears, and on her knees implored his pity; and the Duke on his part made apologies for his imprudence.

A few days after this he came to her houſe, and earneſtly recommended it to her to learn the French language, which as yet ſhe underſtood very imperfectly. M. de Richelieu paid her ſeveral other viſits, and always treated her with the higheſt reſpect. She was a conſtant gueſt at all his entertainments, and when any queſtions were aſked him concerning her, he made

made this uniform reply—" *She is a* " *lady of great diſtinction.*"

The reſt of the examination conſiſted of minute circumſtances, foreign to our purpoſe; and chiefly reſpected the company with whom ſhe aſſociated during her reſidence at Bourdeaux. It muſt not however be forgotten, that ſhe had there two very advantageous offers of marriage: the one from M. de ——; the other from the nephew of M. de Ferrand, a counſellor of the parliament of Bourdeaux. She refuſed both; conceiving herſelf bound to perpetual celibacy by the promiſe ſhe had made the ſtranger in Bohemia.

It is neceſſary to mention her pecuniary reſources. We have already

 obſerved,

obſerved, that while ſhe lived with Madame Guillaumot, a perſon unknown preſented her with a purſe containing a thouſand louis-d'-ors. This ſame perſon brought her ſeveral ſums of money afterwards, at different times; and ſhe received through this channel about a hundred and fifty thouſand livres*, without ever learning, or being able to diſcover to whom ſhe was obliged for this noble allowance.— As all this tended to confirm her in her ideas that ſhe belonged to a very wealthy family, ſhe ſpent this money as faſt as ſhe received it. On a ſudden her remittances ſtopped. She had little or no money by her—ſo that in a ſhort time, as ſhe made no alteration

* £.6250 ſterling.

alteration whatever in her ſtyle of living, ſhe contracted debts to the amount of ſixty thouſand livres, which remained undiſcharged at the time of her being arreſted at Bourdeaux.

In the deſperate ſituation to which the menaces of her creditors reduced her, ſhe took the wild reſolution of fabricating thoſe letters, which when preſented to her at her examination, ſhe owned were dictated by herſelf. As, firſt, the letter to M. de Cobenzel, dated, "VIENNA—*From my* "*bed—two in the morning.*"—Another, ſigned, "Le Comte J. de Weiſ- "ſendorff."—Another to the Emperor, addreſſed to Florence.—Another to the Bavarian Miniſter at Paris.—And, laſtly, the letter to the

King of Spain, which had led to the diſcovery. But though ſhe frankly confeſſed the having ſent all theſe letters, ſhe declared at the ſame time her perfect ignorance of that ſigned "Le Comte de Dietrichſtein"—and of ſeveral others, which the Counts de Cobenzel and de Neny had received from time to time concerning her.

It is obſervable, that her ſimplicity was ſo great, as to make it impoſſible to explain to her how highly criminal ſhe had been, in procuring forged letters on ſubjects of ſuch importance. She made the ſame reply now, that ſhe had done to M. St. Gere, at Bourdeaux.—Nay, ſhe innocently perſiſted in it, that ſhe thought ſhe had acted right—be-

cauſe

caufe the extraordinary education that had been given her, the conjectures fhe had formed of her parentage, the portraits which gave fuch weight to thofe conjectures, and the confiderable fums that had been remitted to her, could not but lead her to fufpect, that fhe was in point of fact the late Emperor's daughter. She declared that fhe had never uttered her thoughts to any human creature: but finding herfelf all at once utterly forfaken, fhe concluded the perfon was dead, who had been commiffioned to furnifh her with money. And as fhe fuppofed that this perfon alone was acquainted with the place of her abode, fhe concluded that her fupplies only ceafed, becaufe her refidence was no longer known. However, as fhe

thought

thought it highly probable that her father might have entrufted more than one perfon with the fecret of her birth, fhe hoped, by writing to all the moft illuftrious fervants of the houfe of Auftria, to find fome one, who knowing her hiftory, might place her in that fituation which her father had defigned for her. She faid further, that fhe did not write thefe letters in her own name, becaufe fhe would not expofe herfelf to the troublefome curiofity of thofe, who not being in the fecret, would immediately make enquiry about her birth. That if but one of thofe letters had fallen into the hands of any perfon acquainted with her ftory, that perfon would immediately have known more par-

ticulars

ticulars of her life than ſhe herſelf could know. In the mean time, her ſuſpicions being unſupported by poſitive proof, all that ſhe could ſay would not prevent her paſſing for an impoſtor. She added, that a ſtrong argument of her conſcious innocence, and of her firm perſuaſion that ſhe was really the Emperor's daughter, might be drawn from the circumſtance of her having pointed out the place of her abode in all her letters; every one of which tended to put her in the power of the court of Vienna—that court, which was alone intereſted in puniſhing a fraud of this nature.—She affirmed, that ſhe never had conſulted any perſon whatever as to the ſteps ſhe had taken

—and

—and ſhe particularly denied having written the letter, ſigned "The Princeſs d'Averſberg," which the Duke de Richelieu received ſoon after her arrival at Bourdeaux.

One remark ought to be made upon this letter. The Duke immediately ſent a polite anſwer to the Princeſs d'Averſberg, ſtating, "that "in conſequence of her recommenda- "tion, he would treat Mademoiſelle "de Schonau with all poſſible reſpect, "and would afford her every ſervice "in his power." This letter was delivered to the Princeſs by M. de Chatelet, at that time the French Ambaſſador at Vienna. We may naturally ſuppoſe, that if ſhe had not written to the Duke in favour of the

ſtranger,

ſtranger, ſhe would immediately have anſwered, that ſhe knew not ſuch a perſon as Mademoiſelle de Schonau; for no one would willingly ſecond any impoſture—but ſhe made no anſwer whatever. It is natural therefore to ſuppoſe, that ſhe did write the letter of recommendation—and that conſequently ſhe knew all the myſteries of the ſtranger's birth. This being the caſe, what motive could have induced the Empreſs ſo expreſſly to guard her miniſters againſt aſking any queſtions whatever of the Princeſs d'Averſberg? This would infallibly have led to a diſcovery of the whole ſtory.

The account which the priſoner gave of the late Duke of York is likewiſe

likewiſe very important. As ſoon as his Royal Highneſs arrived at Bourdeaux, he ſent to inform Mademoiſelle de Schonau, that he had an affair of great conſequence to communicate to her; and he requeſted her to appoint ſome time, when he might ſee her, without the knowlege of any perſon in the city. She replied, that if he wiſhed for ſecrecy, ſhe thought the moſt private hour would be at ſix in the morning, after a ball which was to be given by the Duke de Richelieu. His Royal Highneſs came at the appointed time. He told her that the intent of his viſit was to learn the amount of her debts, and that he was commanded by a lady of quality to give her a ſum of money. She confeſſed to him,

him, that her creditors importuned her greatly for fixty thoufand livres. He defired her to make herfelf perfectly eafy, and the fame day fent her feven hundred louis-d'-ors; informing her, that he would foon furnifh her with money fufficient to difcharge all her debts. His Royal Highnefs left Bourdeaux on the morrow.

A fhort time after this fhe fell fick One morning, whilft St. Gere was by her bedfide, a letter was brought her from the Duke of York, dated "Monaco." St. Gere began to read, as follows—" *I was about to fend you* " *the remainder of your money; but* " *when I left your houfe, I received* " *a letter, which pofitively commanded*

" *me*

"*me to give you no more than a part*
"*of it. I have written to the Princeſs*
"*d'*Av——". St. Gere having read thus far, ſhe ſnatched the letter out of his hands, and would not ſuffer him to finiſh it. (All the circumſtances reſpecting this letter have been ſince proved.)

When ſhe was aſked, why ſhe ſnatched the letter out of St. Gere's hands? and who was the princeſs mentioned in it? ſhe replied, it was the Princeſs d'Averſberg*,—that ſhe herſelf did not know her; but the Duke of York had told her that the Princeſs intereſted herſelf much in her

* The reader is referred, for ſome moſt intereſting anecdotes of this extraordinary lady, to Wraxall's Memoirs of the Court of "Vienna." letter xxxi. vol. 2, page 342.

her behalf; and that *ſhe* knew all the myſtery of her birth—ſhe ſaid, that when ſhe heard the firſt ſyllable of her name, ſhe feared there might be ſomething in the remainder of the letter more immediately reſpecting the princeſs; or that it might contain the ſecret of her own ſtory, with which ſhe wiſhed St. Gere to be for ever unacquainted. At theſe words, ſhe drew from her pocket the Duke of York's letter. M. de Neny read it aloud. The remainder was as follows:

"*I have written to the Princeſs* "D'AVERSBERG; *and have requeſted* "*permiſſion, at leaſt to ſend you the* "*ſum you want, in order to ſhelter you* "*from the purſuits of your creditors*—— "*but* ———!" —— Here the letter abruptly terminated.

In a few days after her receiving this billet, the ſtranger heard of his Royal Highneſs's death. She ſent to the perſons who were appointed to examine his papers, requeſting them to return her picture and her letters. One letter only was found, which was ſent her, as well as her picture; and another portrait, which afterwards ſhe preſented to M. de Camerlang, at Fort Monterel.

The examination, after twenty-four ſittings, being entirely finiſhed, Meſſrs. de Cobenzel and De Neny ſeriouſly conſidered what ſteps were moſt proper to be taken in conſequence of it. The Court having deſired them to give their opinion, they agreed, "That the moſt prudent mea-

" ſure

“ ſure would be to place the poor
“ girl in ſome diſtant convent, and
“ there keep her, till time ſhould
“ throw ſome light on this myſterious
“ affair.” At the moment when this opinion was to have been tranſmitted to Vienna, M. de Neny received a letter from his father (private ſecretary to the Empreſs) which ſtated, that from the examination, which had been ſent from time to time to court, her Imperial Majeſty had formed a very diſadvantageous opinion of the ſtranger; and that ſhe was determined to treat her with the utmoſt ſeverity. After reading theſe diſpatches, M. de Neny's ſentiments were ſo entirely changed, that he propoſed ſending the unhappy priſoner to Bourdeaux,

 and

and there putting her into the power of her creditors. He even ſent this to Vienna, as his opinion. But the Count de Cobenzel, whom no conſideration whatever could induce to change thoſe ſentiments which honour and humanity dictated, feared not, in behalf of innocence, to diſpleaſe his ſovereign herſelf: and wrote as follows:——

" Though it appears to me, that the " priſoner is not the daughter of the " Emperor, there are, however, cir- " cumſtances in her ſtory, which " throw a myſterious perplexity over " her birth; and in this ſtate of un- " certainty, I cannot be of Monſieur " de Neny's opinion. I likewiſe " think, that the meaſure propoſed

" by

" by that gentleman, of ſending her " back to her creditors, is repugnant " to the well-known clemency and " benevolence of her Imperial Ma-" jeſty, and at the ſame time mili-" tates againſt her wiſh, that this " affair ſhould be buried in ſilence, " as much as poſſible. If the poor " wretch be ſent to her creditors, " ſhe will be reduced to the fatal " and horrible alternative of pe-" riſhing without relief in a priſon, " or of ſeeking ſupport in infamy " itſelf, by means of her beauty and " perſonal recommendations. — And " perhaps the Empreſs may be in-" duced to pity this unfortunate " young woman, when her Ma-" jeſty is aſſured that her morals

" appear to have been as yet irre-
" proachable. Befides, to fend her
" again to Bourdeaux, would be to
" give weight to thofe reports which
" ought to be fuppreffed —— be-
" caufe all the world will fay, that
" the impofture not having been
" punifhed, the ftory of her birth
" muft needs have been in fome
" meafure believed. The objection,
" *that it will be neceffary to pay her*
" *debts, if we do not put her a-*
" *gain in the hands of her creditors,*
" appears to me trifling, when com-
" pared with thofe ferious evils,
" which will refult from following
" my colleague's opinion. Her debts
" do not amount to fixty thoufand
" livres — fhe has effects of confi-
" derable

" derable value at Bourdeaux, the " ſale of which will produce a great " part of that ſum; and the remainder " appears to me below the conſi- " deration of her Imperial Majeſty's " munificent heart. This generoſity " will give the Empreſs an abſolute " right to diſpoſe of the unfortunate " priſoner in ſuch a manner, as to " reſcue her from the dangers of ſe- " duction. My opinion therefore is,

" That her Imperial Majeſty would " do well to ſend her to a convent in " the Tirol, or ſome other diſtant pro- " vince of her dominions, where no " rumour of the ſtory hath hitherto " been circulated. — She may there " paſs a life of peace and obſcurity " at a trifling expence to the Em-

" prefs; and if time ſhould throw " any light on her hiſtory, if ſhe " ſhould appear to belong to per- " ſons of rank and diſtinction, as " the large ſums put into her hands " lead us to believe, we ſhall not " have to reproach ourſelves with " thoſe misfortunes, to which this " young creature will inevitably be " expoſed, if M. de Neny's advice " ſhould be taken. Indeed, I look " upon it to be dangerous on every " account. I ſhould even prefer the " putting the priſoner to death at " once, if this were not totally irre- " concileable with every idea of her " Imperial Majeſty's clemency. Should " the Court deign to liſten to my " opinion, the young lady's property

" may

" may be ſold, and her debts paid, " without any ſuſpicion on the part " of her creditors, that the Empreſs " is concerned. And this they muſt " not think, leſt they ſhould be led to " ſuppoſe that her imperial Majeſty " is actuated by *ſomething more* than " mere pity. It will be ſufficient to " write, as from the ſtranger, to a " banker at Bourdeaux; ordering " him to ſell her furniture and ef- " fects, and to take an exact account " of her debts: whatever it may be " neceſſary to add may be ſent in " the young lady's name—and her " creditors, ſatisfied with being paid, " and having been accuſtomed to " ſee her in poſſeſſion of conſiderable " ſums, will have no reaſon to ſuſpect

" the

"the benevolent hand, which affords "her this laſt ſuccour."

This wiſe advice was not followed; and that of the Count de Neny was impracticable. The Duke de Choiſeul refuſed to grant the paſſport neceſſary to conduct the unhappy priſoner to Bourdeaux. In vain M. de Barré, (Secretary to the Embaſſy at Paris, and Chargé des Affaires in the Count de Mercy's abſence) repreſented to the Duke, that her creditors would be injured, if their debtor was not reſtored to them. He ſeemed to think it a plea of no conſequence, and perſiſted in his refuſal.

The day before M. de Cobenzel's death, after he had received the ſacrament, he ſaid to a confidential friend,

friend, who had been made acquainted with every circumſtance reſpecting the ſtranger: "I have juſt received diſ-"patches from Vienna, charging me "to acquaint the Court with the "priſoner's whole hiſtory — by no "means to diſmiſs her—and to take "no ſtep without freſh orders." He alluded to a letter juſt received from M. de Kaunitz. The Count immediately burnt it; adding, by way of reflexion, "*You ſee an honeſt man's "opinion will ſometimes prevail.*"

He died the next day: and it is probable, that but for this misfortune, the affair would have ended in a very different manner. If ſimilar orders came to any other perſon, they came too late.

Four days after his death, the ſtranger was taken out of priſon—a Sub-Lieutenant of the Marechauſſée of Brabant conducted her to Quiévraing, a ſmall town between Mons and Valenciennes*—fifty louis-d'-ors were put into her hands—and ſhe was abandoned to her wretched deſtiny.

* About a day's journey from Calais, or Oſtend.

*** *This narrative is a faithful abſtract of the twenty-four examinations which* M. DE COBENZEL'S *nephew, the* COUNT DE CORONINY, *who himſelf was preſent during all of them, communicated to the Author.*

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX,

N°. I.

Extracted from the Newspaper call'd "The PORCUPINE" of Tuesday, Jan. 27, 1801.

DEATH

OF THE

LADY OF THE HAY-STACK.

LATELY died in Guy's Hospital, the once unfortunate celebrated Louisa, or Lady of the *Hay-stack*, who about eighteen years ago*, was found to have taken up her residence under

* She was first discovered in the year 1776.— See Appendix No. 2.

under *that ſhelter*, in the pariſh of Bourton, near Briſtol, in a ſtate of melancholy derangement. She then appeared to be under twenty-† years of age. This very extraordinary woman, whoſe "tale of woe" was firſt told to the public by Miſs Hannah More, has naturally ceaſed, for a conſiderable time paſt, to intereſt the general curioſity.

During ſeveral days of her abode under the hay-ſtack (from which ſhe at laſt permitted herſelf to be removed with reluctance) ſhe was viſited, and regularly fed by the country-people, till the hand of more happy ſympathy and compaſſion provided her better protection. As her name

† About four & twenty.—See Appendix, No. 2.

name was unknown, ſhe was immediately diſtinguiſhed by that of Louiſa. It may be gratifying to many on this occaſion to learn, that during a conſiderable interval, in which ſhe afterwards remained in retirement, and before ſhe was admitted as incurable into the aſylum in which ſhe died, ſhe was chiefly ſupported by a voluntary ſubſcription, under the management of Miſs Hannah More and her ſiſters. Thoſe active advocates of humanity, who never yet began a good work and grew weary of well-doing, having loſt the pecuniary aſſiſtance of moſt others, continued to ſupply the extra wants and accommodations of the poor ſolitary ſtranger, at the expence of more than

than ten pounds per annum, till her deceaſe. They would be the laſt to wiſh that ſuch an inſtance of benevolence ſhould be publicly mentioned; but it is a tribute due, not leſs to them, than to the intereſts of ſociety.

The ſame kind, and much the ſame degree of mental derangement, which the "tale of woe" deſcribed, remained with Louiſa to the laſt. In her general conduct ſhe exhibited the various common evidences of the moſt confirmed inſanity; which, in addition to the contraction of her limbs, from her expoſure to cold in the open field, and from her conſtant propenſity to remain inactive, rendered her an object of the ſtrongeſt pity. But her inſanity was uniformly

remarkable

remarkable in this, that however difordered and childiſh her affections and reſentments were, ſhe never could be drawn into any explanation reſpecting her family, her connections, or her country: however affable and unguarded ſhe might ſometimes appear, the moment any perſon put a queſtion, directly or indirectly, relative to thoſe topics, or made any alluſion to them, however diſtant, ſhe always changed countenance, aſſumed an air of ſuſpicion, grew grave, and inflexibly ſilent, or would inſtantly touch on ſome other ſubject. From her accent *ſhe was undoubtedly of German origin*; but though ſhe knew little of Engliſh, ſhe avoided converſing in any foreign language. Her

manners, and occaſional movements, indicated ſuperior rank; and her frequent exclamations of "dear papa" and "dear mama," in connexion with ideas of equipage and ornaments, led to that concluſion.

Many endeavours were uſed on the continent, to trace her family, by circulating her deſcription and ſtory in the public prints, but without effect.

The myſtery of this ſilence was too remarkable not to confirm the firſt opinion of her being a perſon above the common claſſes, with the additional probability of ſome unhappy and treacherous ſeduction. This laſt opinion, from the whole of the dif-[illegible] evidence, incluſive of the perſonal

ſonal part which poor Louiſa ſome-times involuntarily furniſhed, is not doubted by thoſe, who, with the writer of this article, early ſaw and cloſely obſerved her. The conviction that it is poſſible for any man, making pretenſions to honour, or even of diſ-tinction from a brutal nature, ſo to betray, and ſo to abandon in a foreign land, youth, beauty, the ſtrongeſt ſenſibility, and perhaps the moſt en-gaging innocence, fills the mind with horror of the deed, and with ſhame and indignation for the character! Such profligacy, in this inſtance, may have been of foreign production.—But comparatively happy would it be for this country alſo, if inſtances did not abound among us, of ſimilar

 atrocity,

atrocity, in the conduct of thoſe, who on inferior occaſions make high pretenſions to honour and principle, but who ſeek every opportunity of ſeducing from the abodes of paternal affection, or of innocent employment, whatever is moſt fair and inexperienced; rioting in its ruin for a ſhort ſeaſon, and then committing the greater crime of abandoning it to infamy! The theme is, unhappily, too common to need proof, and too mournful to be dwelt on.

The poor departed child of miſery, whoſe ſtory is here revived, exhibits too ſtrong an inſtance of ſuffering, and excites too much feeling, to be permitted to paſs in the common courſe to oblivion, if it could be avoided. Under this impreſſion, permit

mit me to attempt ſomething in the character of an EPITAPH. But alas! poor Louiſa's tablet of remembrance may only be found in the ſympathetic boſom of a few ſurviving friends!

In yonder duſt, unmark'd for public fame,
Low reſt the relicks of Louiſa's frame.
Poor hapleſs ſuff'rer, of the maniac line!
Thy wrongs no more a tortured breaſt confine.
Enough for thee, that ling'ring ſorrow's breath
Found final reſcue in the boon of death!
Conſol'd be they, who ſought thy ſoul's relief;
Tormented they, who overwhelm'd with grief!
Accurs'd the crime, that 'reft thy reaſon's ray,
Though thou be ranſom'd for eternal day!
And where frail innocence would vice repel,
May guardian angels thy ſad ſtory tell!

Bath, January 20, 1801.

APPENDIX,

N°. 2.

From the "GENTLEMAN's MAGAZINE," for October, 1785. (Vol. LV. page 791.)

MR. URBAN,

AT the cloſe of your review of a late publication, entitled "A Narrative of Facts ſuppoſed to "throw light on the Hiſtory of the "Briſtol Stranger, &c." you expreſs a doubt of the poſſibility, that Mademoiſelle La Frëulen, and the unhappy Louiſa, can be one and the ſame perſon, grounded on a ſuppoſed difference

difference in point of age. I confeſs that the ſubject is involved in difficulty and obſcurity; while, at the ſame time, there are ſome very ſtriking coincidences, of which the public may hereafter be informed through the medium of your excellent Magazine. In the mean time I think it my duty to contend for the *poſſibility* abovementioned; and I therefore requeſt the inſertion of the following account of Mademoiſelle La Frëulen's age, and the ſuppoſed age of Louiſa.

At the ſight of a portrait of the Emperor Francis, at the hotel of the Count de Belgioioſo, at Stockholm, Mademoiſelle La Frëulen was, or pretended to be, ſo affected, that an illneſs (whether real or feigned, it

matters not) was the conſequence. She then *could not be more than ſixteen.* This was in the latter end of 1765, or the beginning of 1766, for it was ſoon after the death of the Emperor, which event took place in the autumn of 1765. Mademoiſelle La Frëulen was therefore born in the year 1750, or 1749 at the utmoſt; and, if now living, is about five and thirty years old.

It will not, I am ſure, be denied me, that conjectures with reſpect to the preciſe age of a ſtranger muſt ever be liable to ſome degree of error. I muſt avail myſelf a little, and ſhall very little, of this poſtulatum.

I am informed, on the moſt reſpectable and undoubted authority, that

that when Louiſa was firſt diſcovered, in the year 1776, ſhe appeared to be about *four and twenty.* According to the above ſtatement, Mademoiſelle La Frëulen's age was then only *ſix and twenty*; a very trifling difference, and not to be adduced in evidence againſt facts, if facts can be obtained on the contrary part.

Your inſerting the above will be conſonant to the candour with which your uſeful deſign is carried on, to the amuſement and information of the public.

Your's, &c.

The Tranſlator of

"A NARRATIVE, &c."

APPENDIX,

N°. 3.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Briſtol, June 29, 1785.

OF the poor unfortunate creature who is the ſubject of your enquiry, I know but little more than you will find in the encloſed narrative.* It is now near four years ſince ſhe fell into my hands: ſhe ſtill continues in the ſame

* The "TALE of REAL WOE," See p. xvii.

ſame ſituation in which ſhe was then placed; it is a private houſe of the beſt reputation for the reception of perſons in her unhappy circumſtances. By the attentions of a very ſkilful Phyſician ſhe is much mended in her health, but her intellects grow worſe and worſe; and for ſome time there has been more of idiotiſm than lunacy in her manners and behaviour. She has once, and I think once only, ſpoken German to a Daniſh perſon who tried her in that language, to whom ſhe talked of Sleſwick, as of a place at which ſhe had lived. This was the only moment in which any thing of her native language or country ever eſcaped her.

When

When we firſt knew her, I think ſhe could not have been above three or four and twenty; her beauty is now quite gone—ſhe is miſerably thin, and is really a melancholy ſpectacle.

I ſhall be impatient to learn what communications your friend has to make; although my hopes of a diſcovery have been growing leſs ſanguine every day, and indeed for the laſt two years I have ſat down in quiet hopeleſſneſs, and have diſcontinued every kind of enquiry. Before that time, no ſtep has been left untried; Count Maréchal tranſlated the little narrative incloſed into German; and a Lady of high diſtinction, reſident in this country, had the goodneſs to ſend it

it to the newſpapers of Vienna, and thoſe of other large cities in Germany: it was publiſhed too in moſt of the great towns in France.

I forgot to ſay, that the diſconſolate Louiſa once confeſſed that her father had confined her in a Convent, in order to puniſh her for refuſing to marry a man of *his* choice, and to hinder her from marrying one of *her own*; and that ſhe had eſcaped from thence; that theſe misfortunes, together with the guilt of flight, and dread of detection had turned her brain. But when preſſed again on the ſubject, ſhe either did not remember, or elſe choſe to deny that ſhe had ever made ſuch a confeſſion.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Briſtol, July 31, 1785.

I purpoſely deferred writing to you till I had ſeen the poor Louiſa. I went to her yeſterday. I muſt tell you, that ſhe does not live in Briſtol, but at the diſtance of ſome miles from thence, at the houſe of a very humane and reſpectable perſon. I took care to furniſh my memory with all the neceſſary documents from the "Narrative," but had the grief to find, that neither the repetition of the names or facts made the leaſt impreſſion. I could not obtain her attention for a moment; and when ſhe

ſhe perceived I wiſhed to watch her countenance, ſhe wrapped up her face in her blanket, the only kind of covering which at preſent ſhe ſuffers to approach her.

As to the narrative, it is ſingularly curious and intereſting in itſelf, abſtractedly conſidered: its relation to Louiſa is at leaſt very probable; there is nothing which contradicts or oppoſes the *poſſibility* of the identity of Mademoiſelle Frëulen and Louiſa. I believe I never told you, that ſhe has a particular paſſion for bracelets and miniature pictures, with the moſt ſovereign contempt for every other ornament. Of a Queen Anne's half-crown ſhe is vaſtly fond; ſhe has ſometimes deſired to have one ſewed on a

black

black ribbon; ſaid it much reſembled her mamma; would wear it on her arm, and kiſs it with great delight: but ſhe has now no pleaſure in any thing.

I muſt not omit one particular. A gentlewoman, born and bred at Altona, and wife to a Captain of a Daniſh ſhip, reſident in Briſtol, once went to ſee Louiſa when ſhe was under the Hay-ſtack; *with her ſhe talked German*, and told her ſhe had lived at Sleſwick, had been in a convent, and had eſcaped with her lover. By a ſtrange revolution of fortune this foreigner, (who is genteel and well-behaved) is reduced to be a ſuperintending ſervant in the very houſe where Louiſa is confined, and has the chief

chief care of her. Louiſa, remembering the former confidence ſhe had made her, was offended at the ſight of her, and never could be prevailed on to renew the converſation; though ſhe frequently ſpeaks ſhort ſentences to her in German, particularly if ſhe wants tea, or has any other favour to aſk.

One ſtriking circumſtance which concurs with the narrative is, *that I never could prevail on her to look in a book**. Being once preſſed to it, ſhe cried out, "No, reading is ſtudy, and "ſtudy makes me mad." Books have been left in the room, but, though ſhe has been narrowly watched, ſhe has never been obſerved to read in any of them.

* See "LOUISA," page 21.

I made the Daniſh woman talk German to her laſt night, which threw her into a violent paſſion. To this woman I have given the principal names in the narrative, with directions to mention them as ſhe finds occaſion. She never riſes from her bed of ſtraw—on that ſhe lies quietly, and is harmleſs and ſtupid; but if they attempt to dreſs her, or put her on a comfortable bed, ſhe is outrageous. It is happy, however, that ſhe never requires to be treated with harſhneſs; the utmoſt of her violence amounting but to ſhort fits of reſentment, on being diſturbed from her indolent repoſe.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Bristol, August 24, 1785.

I had the favour, a few days ago, of a letter from your friend, dated from Buxton: but as he mentions being on a tour, he wishes me to address my answer to you, who are (I presume) acquainted with his present place of residence.

Your friend and you will be surprised that I can answer positively the very important and striking question respecting the wounds and scars of La Fréulen ‡; he is of opinion that if the same are found on the person of Louisa it would almost fully identify them. Now it is very certain,

 and

‡ See "LOUISA," page 42.

and very ſingular, that poor Louiſa *has a very large wound on the lower part of her head, behind her ear*; ſhe has alſo a large ſcar upon her breaſt, which ſeems to have been occaſioned by a very conſiderable wound; the latter we always ſuſpected to have been a mark of violence, and I wonder it never occurred to me to mention it to you. Whether ſhe has any wound upon her *ſcull*, properly ſo called, I have yet had no opportunity of examining; but thoſe which I have mentioned, form ſurely a ſtrange co-incidence.

I have written to a friend, who knew the Emperor Francis, to aſk if the lower part of his face projected a little, or, as it is vulgarly called if he

was

was under-hung. *That is the case with Louisa*; and I am assured that the faces of the present Emperor and the Queen of France are of that form—their pictures certainly are so.

LETTER IV.

Bristol, October 5, 1785.

I do not think I have acted fairly in having kept from you for so long a time the information I intended to have sent you on a subject in which you have been so interested. Not satisfied with the former discoveries I communicated to you, I

caufed Louifa's hair to be cut very clofe, *and on her fcull difcovered the fcar of an old wound**. This is furely very ftrong evidence. Did I ever tell you, that I caufed your book to be put into ———'s hands? I have however heard nothing from that quarter, tho' I wrote a letter ftrongly expreffing my belief of the identity of La Frëulen and Louifa; but I probably fhall have further information on this fubject.

Judge of my aftonifhment the other day, to hear my name cried about the ftreets, in concert with that of Louifa, by an itinerant vender of dying fpeeches and half-penny ballads. I ftopped the man, and bought one of his

* See "LOUISA," page 42.

his papers, which will probably divert you as much as it did me. It is juſt ſuch a mixture of truth, fable, and raſh concluſion, as we find makes up the ſum of moſt hiſtory, ancient and modern. I incloſe it for your amuſement.*

* "The wandering Young Lady||.—Being a faithfull Account of the Birth, Travels, and Sufferings, of the YOUNG LADY, who about 4 years ago was taken from a Hay Stack, at Bourton, in the County of Somerſet, where ſhe had taken up her Reſidence for near 4 years, and who as it ſince appears is a natural Daughter of the late Emperor of Germany.— Near four years ago a young woman ſtopped at the above village, and begged the refreſhment of a little milk. There was ſomething ſo attractive in her whole appearance as to engage the attention of all around her, ſhe was extremely young and ſtrikingly beautiful, her manners graceful and elegant, and countenance intereſting to the laſt degree: ſhe was alone — a ſtranger — and in extreme diſtreſs, yet

|| Printed *Verbatim* from the Paper.

yet ſhe uttered no complaint, and uſed no arts to receive compaſſion. — Her whole deportment and converſation bore viſible marks of ſuperior breeding, yet there was a wildneſs, and want of conſiſtency in all ſhe ſaid and did.

All day ſhe wandred about in ſearch of a place to lay her wretched head, and at night actually took up her lodgings under an old hay ſtack. The neighbouring ladies remonſtrated with her on the danger of ſo expoſed a ſituation, but in vain; their bounty ſupplied her with the neceſſaries of life, but neither prayers nor any means could induce her to ſleep in a houſe, as ſhe ſometimes diſcovered evident marks of inſanity, ſhe was at length brought and confined in St. Peter's Hoſpital in the City of Briſtol.

I paſs over this period of her hiſtory — it is too touching for my own feelings: — It would too tenderly affect the ſenſibility of the reader. At length ſhe made her eſcape, with all the ſpeed her ſmall remains of ſtrength allowed, ſhe flew to her beloved hay ſtack, though it was ſix miles from the place of her confinement. Her rapture was inexpreſſible on finding herſelf at liberty, and once more ſafe beneath this miſerable ſhelter.

Hardſhip, ſickneſs, intenſe cold, and extreme miſery have gradually injured her health, and impaired her beauty, but ſhe is ſtill a moſt intereſting figure; there is an uncommon ſweetneſs

ſweetneſs and delicacy in her air and manner; ſhe is above all that vanity ſo common to her ſex, for ſhe will neither wear nor accept of any finery or ornaments, but hangs them on the buſhes as below her attention. — Her way of life is the moſt harmleſs and unoffending that can be immagined; every fine morning ſhe walks round the village, converſes with the poor children, makes them little preſents of ſuch things as are given her, and receives others in return, ſhe will take nothing except milk and tea, or the moſt ſimple diet. No means have been left unattempted by the neighbouring ladies to prevail on her to live in a houſe, but her conſtant reply is, "that trouble and miſery dwell in houſes, and that there is no happineſs but in liberty and freſh air." From a certain peculiarity of expreſſion, with a ſlight foreign tincture, in her pronunciation and in the conſtruction of ſome ſentences, ſome have been led to conjecture, ſhe is not of this country, various attempts have been made at different times to draw from this circumſtance ſome knowledge of her religion. About a year ago a gentleman ſpoke to her in the language of the Continent, ſhe appeared uneaſy, reſtleſs, and embarraſſed, but when he addreſſed her in German, her emotion was too great to be ſuppreſſed, ſhe turned from him and burſt into tears. This Anecdote which is told in the neighbourhood was a few days ago related to two

two gentlemen, who from humanity were led to vifit this forlorn creature. One of them who fpoke German fluently, made the experiment; fhe was evidently confufed, blufhed, and by accident, or knowledge in the language, anfwered fome queftions in Englifh, but as if fhe had been hurried into an imprudence, fhe artfully changed the fubject, and denied having underftood what had been faid to her in German.

This unfortunate lady being thus reduced to a ftate of ideotifm, the benevolent Mifs Hannah Moore, taken care of her, and provided a perfon to attend her at Bitton, in the County of Gloucefter.

Now what renders it evident that fhe is the natuarl daughter of the late Emperor of Germany, is his having fome time before his death, written to his Ambaffador at Bruffells, concerning her, and in which he recommends her to his care and protection in the ftrongeft terms; and in confequence the Ambaffador fupply'd her with money and effects 'till after the Emperor's death. — Soon after which the Emprefs caufed her to be arrefted in France and put in prifon, where fhe remain'd fome time, 'till at length being difcharged, fifty Louis d'Ors were given her and fhe was abandoned to her fate.— The Ambaffador too dying about this time fhe had now no friend, and the Emprefs was her determined enemy, as may be feen by the following

lowing letter ſent to her Ambaſſador at Bruſſells, to which place ſhe had been ſent from France to be examined.

"This wretch wiſhes to paſs for the daughter of our late Royal Maſter—if there were the leaſt probability in the ſtory, I would love her, and treat her like one of my own children:—but I know that it is an impoſture; and I wiſh every poſſible effort to be made that this unhappy creature may no longer profane the dear and venerable name of our departed Lord." —Her Majeſty recommended the ſtricteſt ſecrecy in carrying on the buſineſs—and added, that this adventure already made too much noiſe, and that all Europe would ſoon ring of it.

It is probable ſhe ſoon after this came over to England, in hopes of finding ſome Friend who would eſpouſe her cauſe, but it does not appear that any ever did 'till by her misfortunes ſhe was rendered unable to give a proper account of herſelf, and no wonder ſhe ſhould loſe her ſenſes when it is conſider'd that from being the daughter of the Emperor of Germany, ſhould be reduced to a worſe ſituation than the meaneſt beggar in the Kingdom, who at the worſt of times have a place of ſettlement—as to the Empreſse's envy it is not to be wonder'd at, ſhe being a love-child, muſt have naturally created jelloufy in her breaſt—but totally to abandon her was the utmoſt cruelty, upon the whole,

whole, every one who reads this account, must pity the unhappy lady, who from being half sister to the present Emperor of Germany and to the Queen of France, is by her misfortunes reduced to the state of insanity, and supported by charity in a strange Country."

LETTER V.

Bath, February 9, 1801.

The account of poor Louisa in the public papers was written by a gentleman who had witnessed her forlorn state under the hay-stack. He rather over-rates my services. I felt happy about three weeks ago in paying her funeral expences, and thankful that the poor irrational was removed

removed from this dark and diſordered world to a world of peace and reſt.

Of her latter years I have little to communicate. Finding the recovery of her limbs as hopeleſs as that of her underſtanding, and fearing that ſhe might eventually be left in a ſituation wholly unprotected, I obtained for her an aſylum in the Hoſpital, allowing a certain ſum annually to cloathe her, and to furniſh her with ſuch comforts as ſhe had been accuſtomed to enjoy. I viſited her more than once in this her laſt retreat, till ſhe had ſo far loſt all ſenſibility or knowlege of me, as to make it no longer neceſſary. I incloſe a letter which I received about three weeks ago from the perſon who

had

had long been my agent in paying for and watching over poor Louisa*. It will only mark the day of her funeral, and let you see that there is nothing to be collected about the close of her life.

* See "LETTER VI."

LETTER VI.

London, January 12, 1801.

MADAM,

I fully intended informing you long before this of the happy release of poor Louisa. She had been very ill some time, and could eat very little,

little, (nothing indeed but ſoft nutritious food) and was at laſt carried off rather ſuddenly.

No alteration took place in her mind to the laſt.

Louiſa died on the 19th, and was interred on the 23d of December. She was buried in the ground belonging to the Hoſpital.

I dare not but ſay the change was merciful: her life was miſery, and its continuation not to be deſired.

THE END.

Norbury, Printer,
New-Brentford.

POSTSCRIPT

TO

"LOUISA."

Printed by P. Norbury, New-Brentford,

AND SOLD BY

W. COBBETT & J. MORGAN, R. FAULDER,
J. HATCHARD, F. & C. RIVINGTON,
AND F. WINGRAVE,
LONDON.

1801.

POSTSCRIPT, &c.

March 28, 1801.

††† The Tranflator, having juft received the following authentic memoir from a moft refpectable quarter, is happy in being permitted to add it to his collections on the fubject of Louifa.

JANUARY 14, 1787.

*Memorandum refpecting Louifa, the Lady of the Hay-ftack, whom I vifited, in company with ****** ********, Efq. at a village about four miles from Briftol, while fhe was under the care of Mr. Henderfon, keeper of a private mad-houfe.*

THE firft circumftance which ftruck me was the appearance of youth exhibited in the countenance of Louifa; who had been ftated to

be more than thirty years of age, as far as could be conjectured. I ſhould have conceived her to be no more than twenty five; and, notwithſtanding the injuries which her ſituation and mode of life muſt inevitably have occaſioned to her looks, ſhe has ſtill a very pleaſing countenance. Intereſting it certainly is in a high degree, but it is not eaſy to ſay how much this impreſſion is to be attributed to the previous knowlege of her ſtory. She has fine, expreſſive, black eyes and eye-brows—her complexion is wan, but not ſickly—her under jaw projects a little, and I fancied I could diſtinguiſh ſomething of the Auſtrian lip; but it was not decidedly marked: her noſe has nothing particular, is of

a

a moderate ſize, neither aquiline nor *retrouſſé*—her hair is very dark, if not black, and in length about a year or a year and a half's growth, not being thick, but coming down on her forehead; her arm and hand are delicate, with ſmall long fingers, moiſt to the touch.

Upon being addreſſed, ſhe lifted up her eyes, and having articulated ſome incoherent words, ſhe compoſed herſelf again. Being told "that the gentle-"men were friends who came to ſee "her," ſhe ſmiled, and moved her under-lip for ſome time without pronouncing a word. This practice, which exhibited more of the idiot than any other part of her behaviour, ſhe ſoon left off, when we began to draw her into a ſort of converſation.

"Where is papa?" — "Is mama come for me to take me away?" were the firſt words ſhe uttered, which were frequently reiterated during our ſtay. By addreſſing her in a ſtrain of familiar kindneſs, many replies were drawn from her, and ſhe ſeemed gratified by our joining in her laugh; which under any other circumſtances would be eſteemed a very pleaſant one.

The mode of her ſpeaking Engliſh, tho' imperfect, we could not abſolutely pronounce to be that of a foreigner, but rather that of an infant; as ſhe frequently omitted the connecting particles — and ſometimes made uſe of childiſh epithets.

Our

Our firſt entreaty was that ſhe would reach out her hand, in order that by this kind of ſalutation, we might gain an opportunity of obſerving the grace with which ſhe had been ſaid to move it. There was a delicacy in her manner of giving it; and we had further occaſion to remark, that her motions and attitude (as far as her poſture would admit) were thoſe of a perſon who had been in no common line of life.

We were generally obliged to repeat a queſtion ſeveral times, before ſhe would return an anſwer; not becauſe ſhe did not comprehend it, but either from indifference, which gradually diminiſhed, or warineſs to avoid being entrapped by leading queſtions, againſt which

which it was very evident, in ſpite of her inſanity, that ſhe was conſtantly endeavouring to guard; though now and then, when her ſpirits were raiſed, ſhe was led into replies that threw a glimmering of light on what ſhe had laboured to conceal. This myſterious conduct, which was probably at firſt the effect of deſign and reſolution, is now the conſequence of habit.

Some of the many unconnected queſtions and anſwers which paſſed are as follows; but it muſt be premiſed, that, inſtead of adverting to what we aſked, ſhe more uſually talked of "Mama's coming to take her away," and other ſentences, which, as we were informed by thoſe about her, ſhe was in the habit of uttering.

"Do

"Do you find it cold, Louiſa?" (the door ſtanding open.)

"No, 'tis warm here."

"Do you love the fire?"

"No, no, fire naſty," (with an expreſſive frown).

"We are your friends, we are come to take you away from hence; will you go with us?"

"Yes, (with emotion) but mama muſt come and bring me clothes, I muſt be dreſſed," (pointing her hands towards her neck and ſhoulders, and moving her fingers about, as when we deſcribe the finery of female dreſs).

"We ſhall go in a coach and four horſes, and we will make them gallop; and the people ſhall admire us as we paſs along."

Here

Here ſhe burſt into a fit of laughter and a ſort of exultation, as if enjoying the idea of parade.

"And we ſhall let all the glaſſes down."

"No, that will be too cold."

By this anſwer, and other minute circumſtances, ſhe appeared to have a proper notion of a carriage, and to have been uſed to one.

"But where ſhall we drive to?"

"Home!"

"But where, to what home?"

"Oh, here and there, backwards and forwards, all round about," (waving her hand).

"Shall we, Louiſa, (pointedly) ſhall we drive to Bohemia?"

"*That is papa's own country.*"

This

This remarkable anſwer came from her in a perfectly fair and direct manner, after ſhe had been in a train of talking and laughing, and when ſhe might be ſuppoſed to be off her guard. We took the opportunity of joining in her laugh, and aſking other queſtions before her ſpirits had time to ſubſide, or her warineſs returned; but our deſign was not ſucceſsful. She would inſtantly aſſume a ſerious, and even a ſullen look, when ſhe thought our interrogations impertinent. Sometimes ſhe evaded them in a different manner. She talked much about a ſiſter. We offered to call her—

"But how ſhall we addreſs her? What is her name?"

"She

"She will tell you when ſhe comes," (with a ſignificant air).

"Is your ſiſter like you, Louiſa?"

She laughed.

"If ſhe is like you ſhe is very pretty."

A ſort of bluſh came over her cheek, and, caſting down her eyes with a coquettiſh ſmile, ſhe tried to hide her face in the ſtraw of her bed.

When ſpoken to in French ſhe ſeemed (but not very decidedly) to underſtand it, and particularly, when deſired, in that language, to give her hand at parting, ſhe reached it out; but the correſponding action on our part might poſſibly have induced her to do this, independently of the requeſt; certainly, however, when addreſſed in French, ſhe did not give leſs ſigns

ſigns of intelligence than when ſpoken to in Engliſh, nor did ſhe expreſs by her countenance any ſurpriſe at the change of language. She did not however ſpeak a word of French. I tried a few words of German, at which ſhe burſt into immoderate fits of laughter,as if at my awkward pronunciation of it, and miſapplication of words. No French phraſe addreſſed to her had the ſame effect.

When the diſcourſe ran on the ſubject of travelling, I mentioned a variety of towns in Europe, but without being able to perceive any concomitant emotion. When aſked if ſhe liked Bruſſels, ſhe ſeemed to contract a look of diſpleaſure or diſguſt—and I think the ſame, when Bruſſels-lace was mentioned

tioned to her. I talked about croſſing the ſea, and of ſea-ſickneſs. No particular words dropped from her, but ſhe appeared to grow ſerious and reſerved, and to diſcourage the ſubject.

She frequently talked of dreſs, and by her action ſeemed to expreſs an expectation of, and a deſire for fine clothes,* but ſhe concluded her broken ſentences with ſaying, "They muſt be like this—and the colour of this," pointing to the ſtraw, and ſometimes to the blanket which lay looſely over her. I believe ſhe never mentioned dreſs without that proviſo.

"Will you have your hair dreſſed, Louiſa?"

"Oh,

* In point of fact, ſhe never could be prevailed on to wear them. This was therefore one of the irregularities of wayward inſanity.

"Oh, no, no," (with a look of indignation, which was repeated when I talked of powder) "my hair muſt be thus," (pointing to and laying delicate hold of the ringlets on her forehead) "and when I go home it will flow down my back and ſhoulders, or come down here," pointing to them.

This laſt was expreſſed partly by action and partly by words, the particular phraſe, excepting in ſhort replies, not being always exactly collected, tho' her idea was perfectly intelligible.

The term *Papa* ſhe applied in a vague and incoherent manner; ſometimes to the gentleman (Mr. Henderſon) who, has the charge of her, and at times to ſome unknown perſon

at

at a diſtance, to whoſe home ſhe talked of going.

There is a peculiarity in her enunciation, approaching, but not amounting, to a liſp, or as when the tongue ſlightly touches the under row of teeth. Her voice is ſoft and feminine, and I never heard her loud, except in her fits of laughter; but our interview did not exceed an hour, and her humours are ſaid to be various—to us ſhe was good-natured, and I might almoſt ſay, affable. After the door was locked on her, we could hear her laughing. In ſpite of the miſery of her condition, ſhe ſeems not to be unhappy.

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THE END.

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